

## **The Way God's Children Behave Showing Respect for the Father**

**Intro:** Let's turn again to 1 Peter 1. Let's not lose sight of where we are in the Peter's conversation with God's people. Having stressed to them who they are and what they have as God's children, Peter now urges them to live like God's children.

**Just as there are some things we have a right to expect of our children, so God has a right to expect some things from us as well! Peter enumerates a series of exhortations showing how God's children behave:**

### ***First God's children imitate their father:***

*As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (1 Pet. 1:14-16)*

### **Now let's consider Peter's second exhortation:**

*And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (1 Pet. 1:17-21)*

**God's children not only imitate their Father; they also fear or respect Him!**

### **The responsibility to fear the Father**

***Fear has a broad semantic range in both Greek and English: terror, fear, alarm, fright, reverence, respect, awe.***

#### ***Fear of God is first of all terror at the prospect of punishment***

*It is a terrifying (fearful, KJV) thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:31)*

That fear is rooted in the recognition of God as Judge of all, who will punish those who live in disobedience to Him.

*"And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. "But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him! (Luke 12:4-5)*

***This terror of punishment for the believer has been ameliorated by the grace and mercy of God in the gospel.***

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:1)*

*For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" (Rom. 8:15)*

John tells us that as the love of God is perfected in us, the terror of punishment is "cast out."

*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. (1 Jn. 4:18)*

***Fear of God then is transformed into a feeling of reverence or awe because of the character, position, and power of God.***

Vine defines this fear of God as a fear that is "reverential and moral, a controlling motive of the life, in matters spiritual and moral, not a mere fear of His power and righteous retribution, but a wholesome dread of displeasing Him, a fear which banishes the terror that shrinks from His presence and which influence the disposition and attitude of one whose circumstances are guided by trust in God through the indwelling Spirit of God."

Ill. Two young people are contemplating doing something wrong: One says, "If my father found out, he would kill me!"

The other says, "If my father found out, it would kill him!"

When we can get to a point in our life that what matters most to us is what our actions do to God, then we're getting the idea of Christian fear! This is the fear that a loving child has for a loving father.

"Reverent fear" is evidenced by a tender conscience, a watchfulness against temptation, and avoiding things that would displease God.

**(Bible Knowledge Commentary on 1 Peter)**

***The main exhortation then of this paragraph is "conduct yourselves in fear." But Peter's couches this exhortation in a series of truths that explain:***

### **Why we should fear God**

***Because we address Him or call upon Him as Father***

*And if you address as Father...*

Do you remember a time in your life when you blurted out something disrespectful to a parent and the other quickly put you back in your place, "That's no way to talk to your father/mother!"

We ought to fear God for the same reason that we ought to fear our earthly parents; because He is our Father. We are His spiritual creation. He has caused us to be born again.

We ought to fear God because we call upon Him for help and blessing in this life. Every time God answers a prayer, grants a blessing we ought to fear Him more!

***Because God will impartially judge us according to our deeds.***

*the One who impartially judges according to each man's work,*

This expression reminds us first that God will be our judge.

It reminds us that His judgment will be impartial.

This is assuring that we will be treated fairly.  
But is also a warning that we will not get special treatment.  
Sometimes children misbehave because they know that Daddy  
can get them off the hook. He has connections. We won't get  
off the hook because we have a close connection with the  
Judge.

***Because life on earth is only temporary***

*during the time of your stay upon earth;*

If a visitor comes among us we may inquire about where he "lives"  
and he will tell us the city or town of his residence. We may also ask,  
"Where are you staying?" We are acknowledging that this is not his  
home!

Peter refers to "the time of our stay on earth" as if to remind us that we  
are strangers living in a foreign land. We're just "staying" here on  
earth; but we're going to "live" somewhere for all eternity!

That ought to put the fear of the Lord in anyone who thinks about it!

***Because God has redeemed us at great cost.***

*knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver  
or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but  
with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood  
of Christ.*

Think of what God did to save our souls. We were not redeemed with  
money, but with blood.

Five temple shekels could redeem a firstborn son at the temple;  
but no amount of money could redeem a sinner from the  
slavery to sin.

Nor could the blood of animals be adequate to redeem us from  
sin. The sacrifices of the OT were inadequate for that purpose.

They were declaring what God would some day do through His  
Son, Jesus Christ!

The Lamb God offered was unspotted and unblemished

Jesus had no sins

Jesus was the best offering possible.

***Because God's plan has existed from before the foundation of the world***

*For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has  
appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are  
believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory,  
Consider that from all eternity God has known what he would do  
through Christ.*

What kind of God is this that makes a world with a purpose in mind  
and methodically after thousands of years sends His Son to be its  
redeemer? God never became impatient or disinterested in the purpose  
He had for mankind, though we are often both.

We ought to fear Him because of this, because we have been able to  
know and to be a part of the plan of the ages!

***Because He is the reason for both our faith and our hope!***

*so that your faith and hope are in God.*

Because of what God has done through Jesus we can look at life differently. When others look at problems and death with despair, we can face them with hope of a better world.

**Conclusion: There's not much worse than a disrespectful and rebellious child, unless it is a disrespectful and rebellious child of God! God has given us every reason to fear Him!**